

MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

2008

**The Development
of Sustainable
Independent Media
in Europe and Eurasia**



MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX 2008

The Development of Sustainable Independent Media in Europe and Eurasia

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Macedonia's overall MSI score is once again down from the previous year, indicating that the drop from 2005 to 2006/2007 was not incidental. All objectives save Objective 2 fell a limited but noticeable amount. As with last year, objectives 1 and 4, freedom of speech and business management, fared the worst; while objectives 3 and 5, plurality of news and supporting institutions, were the leading objectives. None, however, were far from the final average.



MACEDONIA

The practices of the Macedonian government and the police over the past two years have had a significant negative impact on the media. Macedonian journalists suffered unpunished violence in 2007: one journalist reporting from parliament was slapped by the personal security officer of one parliamentarian, and a cameraman of ALSAT TV was beaten up by police officers while attempting to film a police stop of another MP's vehicle. As a result of the police violence, journalists boycotted governmental press conferences.

Furthermore, police used the media to make spectacular arrests on camera. This practice was highly criticized by Macedonian human rights groups. They rightfully claimed that such actions breach the presumption of innocence, are intended to pressure the judiciary, and are, in essence, a modern version of mob justice through the media.

The year was marked also by high governmental spending on advertising. Panelists alleged that the campaigns were used for pumping money from the budget to the media in order to make them dependably favorable toward the government.

Politically, 2007 was marked by two events: NATO membership (an invitation to membership is expected in 2008) and the name dispute with neighboring Greece. These two issues were interconnected: Greece made substantial diplomatic efforts to use the NATO aspirations of Macedonia to force the country to change its name. Diplomatic activities around this issue were increasingly more hectic as the end of the year approached.

There is a downward trend in media sustainability, and members of the Macedonian media are not enjoying their previous freedoms. Again this year, the overall MSI score for Macedonia is slightly lower than the previous year, indicating that the drop from 2005 to 2006/2007 was not incidental. All objectives save Objective 2 fell a limited but noticeable amount. As with last year, objectives 1 and 4, freedom of speech and business management, fared the worst; while objectives 3 and 5, plurality of news and supporting institutions, were the leading objectives. None, however, were far from the final average.

MACEDONIA AT A GLANCE

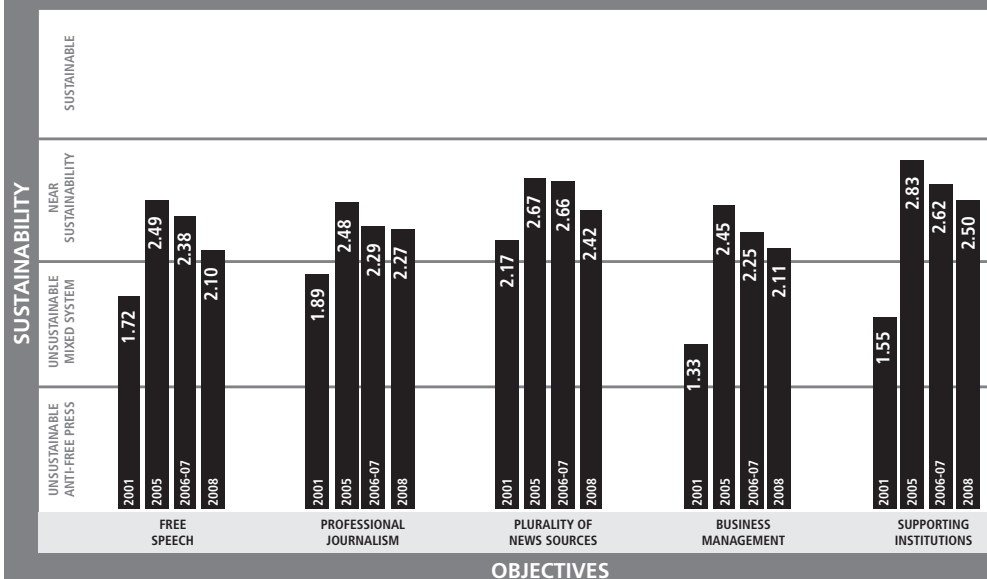
GENERAL

- > **Population:** 2,055,915 (July 2007 est., *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Capital city:** Skopje
- > **Ethnic groups (% of population):** Macedonian 64.2%, Albanian 25.2%, Turkish 3.9%, Roma 2.7%, Serb 1.8%, other 2.2% (2002 census, *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Religions (% of population):** Macedonian Orthodox 64.7%, Muslim 33.3%, other Christian 0.37%, other 1.63% (2002 census, *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **Languages (% of population):** Macedonian 66.5%, Albanian 25.1%, Turkish 3.5%, Roma 1.9%, Serbian 1.2%, other 1.8% (2002 census, *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **GNI (2006-Atlas):** \$6.237 billion (World Bank Development Indicators, 2007)
- > **GNI per capita (2006-PPP):** \$7,610 (World Bank Development Indicators, 2007)
- > **Literacy rate:** 96.1% (male 98.2%, female 94.1%) (2002 census, *CIA World Factbook*)
- > **President or top authority:** President Branko Crvenkovski (since May 12, 2004)

MEDIA-SPECIFIC

- > **Number of active print outlets, radio stations, television stations:** Print: approximately 600 daily, weekly, biweekly, monthly, and periodical editions; Radio: 68; Television stations: 53 (Agency for Information)
- > **Newspaper circulation statistics:** N/A
- > **Broadcast ratings:** top three: A1 (22.5 %), Sitel (13.2 %), Kanal 5 (7.7 %) (Strategic Marketing and Media Research Institute, March 2007)
- > **News agencies:** MIA (state-owned), Makfax (private), NetPres (private)
- > **Annual advertising revenue in media sector:** N/A
- > **Internet usage:** 13% of households have access to the Internet; 27 % of population uses the Internet (Research done by SMMRI financed by USAID)

MEDIA SUSTAINABILITY INDEX: MACEDONIA



Unsustainable, Anti-Free Press (0-1):

Country does not meet or only minimally meets objectives. Government and laws actively hinder free media development, professionalism is low, and media-industry activity is minimal.

Unsustainable Mixed System (1-2):

Country minimally meets objectives, with segments of the legal system and government opposed to a free media system. Evident progress in free-press advocacy, increased professionalism, and new media businesses may be too recent to judge sustainability.

Near Sustainability (2-3):

Country has progressed in meeting multiple objectives, with legal norms, professionalism, and the business environment supportive of independent media. Advances have survived changes in government and have been codified in law and practice. However, more time may be needed to ensure that change is enduring and that increased professionalism and the media business environment are sustainable.

Sustainable (3-4):

Country has media that are considered generally professional, free, and sustainable, or to be approaching these objectives. Systems supporting independent media have survived multiple governments, economic fluctuations, and changes in public opinion or social conventions.

OBJECTIVE 1: FREEDOM OF SPEECH

Macedonia Objective Score: 2.10

This objective's score fell again this year after a high of 2.49 in 2005. Panelists pointed in particular to the worsening security situation for media professionals, and this indicator scored lowest by far. Only Indicator 8, media's access to international news, scored significantly higher than the final average.

Constitutional and legal standards protecting free speech are in line with those commonly accepted in democratic societies. The state constitutionally guarantees freedom of expression and access to information. These rights have been developed further by several laws, such as the law on broadcast activity and the law on access to information. These laws were revised by European institutions and are of relatively high quality, with satisfactory standards.

However, the general perception of panelists was that freedom of speech has been endangered greatly during the past year. They agreed that legislation protects media freedoms, but according to Aco Kabramov, an editor at Channel 5, "Judges are not trained to exercise it in their courts. If the plaintiff is a minister, then the court procedures are swift and journalists are usually fined. If you cite freedom of speech, judges usually point out that you may [address that issue] in the appeals courts."

At the center of the problem is the political dependence of the judiciary and its level of expertise in these kinds of cases. That the public does not consider freedom of speech important does not help. "Freedom of speech and expression are not values in our society," panelist Naser Selmani said. "People consider them [the] exception, not a general right." This attitude contributes greatly to the hostility and unpunished acts against the media and journalists taken by state institutions, the judiciary, and powerful individuals.

Licensing procedures for the media are transparent, but the regulatory body that should perform the licensing, the Broadcasting Council, is under constant threat of collective dismissal. That has greatly contributed to its consent in the tendering procedures for digital terrestrial operators, even though in its strategic documents it states that Macedonia does not have a regulatory framework under which this kind of company should operate. It simply obeys the will of the government to grant that kind of license to one company.

According to Roberto Belicanec of the Media Development Center, the Broadcasting Council "spent the previous year in active opposition to the government, but this year [it is] kissing their feet...All of us know that this tender is premature; all of us know that it is bad for the media

because there is no guarantee of their access to the digital network; all of us know that the dice are marked; and we know which company will win. And the only institution that may raise that as an issue and oppose this—the Broadcasting Council—is giving its consent to this crucial decision. That is not independence."

Business regulations and the tax code do not differentiate the media from other types of businesses, with the exception that print media pay a five percent VAT instead of the standard 18 percent. In general, media operate in a poor economy and that influences heavily their economic independence and sustainability. Therefore, the panel graded this indicator very low.

Unlike in previous years, violence against the media and journalists is a problem. "We [thought] that violence against us [was in] the past, but it has showed up again in its nastiest form," said Robert Popovski, president of the Association of Journalists of Macedonia (ZNM). The problem lies with law enforcement officials not pursuing cases of violence. The media community was outraged by the minister of interior affairs' announcement that the police officers who had savagely beaten the cameramen of ALSAT TV would undergo only disciplinary procedures within the ministry. It took a journalist boycott of government press conferences for charges to be filed against the officers. This example shows that, without pressure on government institutions, either these cases do not receive due process or the mildest possible measures will be imposed on the perpetrators.

LEGAL AND SOCIAL NORMS PROTECT AND PROMOTE FREE SPEECH AND ACCESS TO PUBLIC INFORMATION.

FREE-SPEECH INDICATORS:

- > Legal and social protections of free speech exist and are enforced.
- > Licensing of broadcast media is fair, competitive, and apolitical.
- > Market entry and tax structure for media are fair and comparable to other industries.
- > Crimes against journalists or media outlets are prosecuted vigorously, but occurrences of such crimes are rare.
- > State or public media do not receive preferential legal treatment, and law guarantees editorial independence.
- > Libel is a civil law issue; public officials are held to higher standards, and offended parties must prove falsity and malice.
- > Public information is easily accessible; right of access to information is equally enforced for all media and journalists.
- > Media outlets have unrestricted access to information; this is equally enforced for all media and journalists.
- > Entry into the journalism profession is free, and government imposes no licensing, restrictions, or special rights for journalists.

Journalists are still not performing in accordance with common standards. In general, the level of professionalism and depth of coverage are relatively low. Issues are covered superficially and sources are mostly anonymous. One of the biggest problems is that issues are covered on a one-time basis; media do not follow up on issues and cover their outcomes.

Public media such as Macedonian Radio-Television (MRT) have editorial independence guaranteed by law, but that law is not functioning. In reality, according to panelists, the government has total control over public broadcasters and it uses those outlets heavily for self-promotion. The government accomplishes this through direct budgetary control, which it leverages into the ability to place senior staff as well as induce generally friendly coverage. And while the law does not favor public broadcasters (indeed, the legal limit on the advertising time imposed on MRT is one of the most restrictive in the Europe), government officials do prefer to show up on the talk shows or current affairs programs of public broadcasters.

Libel is still a criminal act, but there is no longer the threat of jail sentences; generally criminal fines of €500 to €1000 are imposed upon the guilty party by the court. However, plaintiffs may then use a guilty criminal verdict to file a civil case. A recent case involved President Crvenkovski and former prime minister Hari Kostov against Nikola Mladenov, publisher and editor of *Fokus* magazine. *Fokus* had published a story alleging that Crvenkovski and Kostov had secret Swiss bank accounts. Mladenov lost the case and had to pay €25,000 in damages.

The burden of proof rests on the defendant and not on the plaintiff, and even then, proving truth is not necessarily a successful defense. A media outlet may relay accurate information and still face penalties for damaging reputation. In the past year, the number of libel cases against journalists increased, according to the panel, and they viewed this as a clear threat to journalists.

In general, the media have access only to unofficial or informal sources of information. The new law on access to information has not improved the situation for journalists: civil servants do not understand it, it does not protect

whistleblowers, and procedures and standards on complying with it are murky. The media do not have any formal limitations on accessing international news and news sources. They are hampered only by their financial ability to pay to use those sources.

The government does not require any special licensing for journalists.

OBJECTIVE 2: PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM

Macedonia Objective Score: 2.27

The score in this objective is essentially the same as last year. Only two indicators were not close to the overall average: Indicator 4, coverage of key events, was about a point higher; and Indicator 5, pay levels for journalists, was close to half a point lower.

Journalists are still not performing in accordance with common standards. In general, the level of professionalism and depth of coverage are relatively low. Issues are covered superficially and sources are mostly anonymous. One of the biggest problems is that issues are covered on a one-time basis; media do not follow up on issues and cover their outcomes. Panelists agreed that another common mistake is that journalists do not adhere to the rule "listen to the other side."

Nearly all journalists in Macedonia recognize and work under ZNM's code of ethics, adopted in 2001. A Council of Honor, part of ZNM, oversees compliance with the code, hears complaints of violations, and issues findings on violations. A

JOURNALISM MEETS PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF QUALITY.

PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISM INDICATORS:

- > Reporting is fair, objective, and well sourced.
- > Journalists follow recognized and accepted ethical standards.
- > Journalists and editors do not practice self-censorship.
- > Journalists cover key events and issues.
- > Pay levels for journalists and other media professionals are sufficiently high to discourage corruption.
- > Entertainment programming does not eclipse news and information programming.
- > Technical facilities and equipment for gathering, producing, and distributing news are modern and efficient.
- > Quality niche reporting and programming exists (investigative, economics/business, local, political).

new and positive development is the formation of an ethics commission within the ZNM. The commission has begun to function, and its findings have already produced some reactions from the media. The ZNM has also begun a project to fight corruption in the journalism profession. The project's research should provide a clearer picture of corruption within the journalistic community.

"It is very pleasing to see that media and journalists finally have started to respond to the findings of the ethics commission within the association," Selmani said.

Panelist Robert Popovski of ZNM said that "self-censorship is ingrained" in the media. Journalists and editors practice self-censorship not so much out of fear of prosecution or other threats, but mostly because of opportunism. Practicing self-censorship can help career advancement prospects within a media outlet, perhaps leading to a spokesperson position in a state institution, and often has financial benefits for the media outlet.

The influence of editors and owners also has been noted as a factor contributing to self-censorship. "Younger journalists are subject to terrible abuse," Kabramov said. "They are put in a position where they have to wait for the approval of the media owner for their pieces. They are aware of that abuse, yet they are submissive."

Generally, journalists cover daily issues and important societal topics, but by failing to deliver in-depth reporting, they are not fostering open public debate. In the past year, however, huge steps forward were made in the coverage of international politics. For the first time, major Macedonian media are covering the NATO and EU accession process from within the country as well as from Brussels. In addition, coverage of the name dispute with Greece was intensive and thorough. "The market had finally pressured the owners to invest in international coverage, so now they are willing to pay the expenses for such coverage," said Goran Momirovski, A1 reporter.

The salary level of journalists is in line with the rest of Macedonian salaries and is between €200 and €400 per month. These low salary levels make journalists vulnerable to external influences and less resistant to corruption. According to Ljubica Mangovska, owner of TV Tera, "The media are not financially able to pay journalists as much as they deserve." As a result, over the last year, a substantial number of the journalists left the field, mostly to take spokesperson positions or work within the government.

Citizens do not have difficulty finding news in the Macedonian media. The ratings system shows that some entertainment programs have overtaken newscasts,

Citizens do not have difficulty finding news in the Macedonian media. The ratings system shows that some entertainment programs have overtaken newscasts, but overall, newscasts are still the highest-rated type of programming. As Belicanec put it, "It is impossible to invent a program that would be more entertaining than the reality that we live in."

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As noted in last year's survey, the equipment used by the broadcast media is in very bad condition. The problem is due mostly to the lack of owner investments and results in substandard production values. Print media, however, tend to have better equipment thanks in part to foreign investment in that sector.

Major media offer some niche reporting, especially regarding the economy and sports. These two areas are usually covered by teams of specialist reporters. Other niche sectors are covered by regular, generalist reporters. Investigative reporting is still missing from journalism in Macedonia.

OBJECTIVE 3: PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES

Macedonia Objective Score: 2.42

After three years of scores above 2.60, the score for this objective fell slightly this year. Indicators 1 and 2, plurality of news sources and citizen access to foreign media, retained their strong performance, coming in well above the average as in the past. However, Indicator 6, transparency of media ownership, dropped significantly. Its score, falling to more than a point lower than the average, accounts almost single-handedly for the lower average this year.

Macedonia has an overcrowded media industry that is, the panelists joked, beyond sustainability. The audience can choose from a multitude of domestic and international sources and services: six national television stations, three

Macedonian law presents no obstacles for citizens to access any form of media. Naser Selmani from Vest, however, said that he sees limitations to overall accessibility. "The problem of the accessibility to media exists in rural areas in general. The access is limited; there are no cable operators; there is no foreign—and often no domestic—press available to these people," he said.

national radio stations, and six major newspapers. The offerings vary with regard to genre, language, and political stance. Television is the number one choice for news, followed by the daily newspapers and radio.

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The Internet is not a significant news source for the population, due to the great digital divide. However, the price drop in Internet access and the entrance of the cable operators in the Internet broadband market have produced

MULTIPLE NEWS SOURCES PROVIDE CITIZENS WITH RELIABLE AND OBJECTIVE NEWS.

PLURALITY OF NEWS SOURCES INDICATORS:

- > A plurality of affordable public and private news sources (e.g., print, broadcast, Internet) exists.
- > Citizens' access to domestic or international media is not restricted.
- > State or public media reflect the views of the entire political spectrum, are nonpartisan, and serve the public interest.
- > Independent news agencies gather and distribute news for print and broadcast media.
- > Independent broadcast media produce their own news programs.
- > Transparency of media ownership allows consumers to judge objectivity of news; media ownership is not concentrated in a few conglomerates.
- > A broad spectrum of social interests are reflected and represented in the media, including minority-language information sources.

a substantial rise in internet penetration. The penetration of the cable networks is around 60 percent of the population. The trend will probably continue, due to the governmental policy to liberalize the telecommunications market.

There has been a significant drop of the circulation of the newspapers. Newspaper prices are on the margin of their operational costs because they are forced to sell at the lowest possible price. The weak consuming power of their audiences is a general problem in the overall performance of the domestic economy.

International news sources are not limited in any manner. Foreign broadcast programming is available via cable distribution in almost half of the homes in Macedonia. The problem of affordability of the foreign press is significant, due to their unreasonably high pricing. Local distributors price those publications at almost twice their original newsstand prices. This situation is different for the press from the neighboring countries—those are priced reasonably.

In general, MRT largely fails to reflect the whole political spectrum. "MRTV [MRT's television channel] set a precedent when [it] aired the interview with the prime minister six times. That is MRTV," said Kabranov.

The restructuring of MRT into a true public service broadcaster has been stuck, and the problem increases every year. The internal system of MRT is obsolete and there is no will for improvement. Typically, the top leadership of MRT changes when new governments come to power, and these appointees owe their jobs to politicians. "They [employees] have a switch in their heads: as the government changes, the switch is activated [and they favor the new government]. They are used to serving the politicians in power," said Nebojsa Karapejovski of TV Menada.

Macedonia has three news agencies: one state-owned and two private. One agency is fully web based. All are functioning satisfactorily and are mostly used by the smaller media. Major private broadcasters produce their own news, which is more dynamic, more informative, and less biased than MRT news. Major broadcasters consider the newscasts the most important programming on their menu and thus devote significant resources in their production. "Even the local TV stations strive to have local newscasts," said Mevaip Abdiu.

Regarding the transparency of media ownership, in Macedonia the public is generally aware of who the actual owners are of the major media in the country. However, the related provisions in the broadcast law that mandate disclosure are not yet functioning, and print media have no obligation to reveal ownership. As in the past, the problem

comes down to determining various sources of financing. Media owners have shown the tendency to misuse the media for their own promotion and have started to heavily influence the content of newscasts. This issue contributed significantly to the lower scores in this indicator this year, according to panelists.

Macedonia has three major media groups that are either under the same ownership or have established synergy. WAZ group consists of three major daily newspapers, one weekly, a distribution network, and a printing plant. A1-Vreme group is the most powerful private group, with a television station, national newspaper, and distribution network. Vecer-Sitel-Cetis group owns a national newspaper, national television station, and printing plant.

With regard to minority groups, the social issues of Macedonian ethnic groups are on the mainstream media agenda, and minority media are produced in minority languages. The problem is that mainstream journalists have a tendency to use ethnic stereotypes, and they fail to promote tolerance and social cohesion.

OBJECTIVE 4: BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

Macedonia Objective Score: 2.11

This objective fell slightly this year, primarily due to a fall of about half a point in the score for Indicator 2 (media receive income from multiple sources) compared to last year. The lowest indicators were for indicators 6 and 7, related to market research and audience/circulation figures. While these were about a third of a point lower than the average, they were both up slightly from last year. Indicator 1, covering operational practices of media and media-related businesses, scored the best, coming in over a half point above the average.

A recent problem in Macedonia is the difficulty of some broadcasters to freely access distribution networks because cable operators have positioned themselves in a place of power. With almost 60 percent of the households as their subscribers, they blatantly force domestic television stations to provide their programming without any compensation.

Advertising is the primary source of income for the media, but revenue from advertising is not satisfactory. A significant amount of air time is available on the market, and harsh competition among the media has produced a drop in prices. Governmental advertising has increased to the point that it is the biggest single advertiser in the market. Panelists said that this is a subtle way to bribe the media. Further, it is unclear how the government decides with which outlets

Advertising is the primary source of income for the media, but revenue from advertising is not satisfactory. A significant amount of air time is available on the market, and harsh competition among the media has produced a drop in prices. Governmental advertising has increased to the point that it is the biggest single advertiser in the market. Panelists said that this is a subtle way to bribe the media.

to place advertisements, adding to suspicions that it is done capriciously.

However, other than through advertising placements, no other government funds are made available to private media. Because the advertising market is too small to support the multitude of media, the government's tactics have especially affected the media in small towns.

Advertising agencies support the media business, but small media usually complain that agencies are not buying there. "The evolution is evident," said Goran Gavrilov, owner of Channel 77. "Four years ago, there were only two agencies. Now there are 22, and the problem is that biggest media are selling with big discounts." Advertising agencies are a mix of local and internationally affiliated firms. The larger ones are well run and respected by the industry.

INDEPENDENT MEDIA ARE WELL-MANAGED BUSINESSES, ALLOWING EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE.

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT INDICATORS:

- > Media outlets and supporting firms operate as efficient, professional, and profit-generating businesses.
- > Media receive revenue from a multitude of sources.
- > Advertising agencies and related industries support an advertising market.
- > Advertising revenue as a percentage of total revenue is in line with accepted standards at commercial outlets.
- > Independent media do not receive government subsidies.
- > Market research is used to formulate strategic plans, enhance advertising revenue, and tailor products to the needs and interests of audiences.
- > Broadcast ratings and circulation figures are reliably and independently produced.

"I agree that APEMM did not achieve spectacular results, but in some issues, such as collective negotiation in the field of copyrights, it has helped media a lot," said Mevaip Abdiu.

No reliable data is available on the circulation and readership of newspapers, leaving agencies to operate with only approximations of circulation. Figures come from the publishers themselves and are considered unreliable. Unlike the press, broadcasting's data system for ratings has been in existence for years. However, some members of the media claim that the data are not reliable, and trust in the system has been very low. Panelists indicated that a second source of data confirming the numbers would help to build trust.

In the last months of 2007, an experimental setup of peplemeters was started in the capital, Skopje. The data is still not relevant, said Kabramov, "but we have to trust to some audience measurement system." The system should be fully functional in 2008, when a full evaluation will be possible.

The media have started to consider research data in creating their advertising rates, but with few exceptions, they lack the knowledge to fully incorporate the information.

OBJECTIVE 5: SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS

Macedonia Objective Score: 2.50

All indicators in this objective scored close to the final average. The small drop in score compared to last year can be attributed to moderate drops in Indicators 1 and 7, covering trade associations and media distribution.

The Macedonian media are supported by several non-governmental organizations and one active association of broadcasters, the Association of Private Electronic Media in Macedonia (APEMM). Panelists had clashing viewpoints on the performance of APEMM. The disagreement was due to the high visibility of this association in contrast with the view of some media owners that APEMM has not successfully represented the interests of all media. Although APEMM has been dominated by members from national television stations, the advocacy issues it has chosen to pursue, such as respect of copyrights, have been relevant to all media. "I agree that APEMM did not achieve spectacular results, but in some issues, such as collective negotiation in the field of copyrights, it has helped media a lot," said Mevaip Abdiu.

Recently, ethical standards in journalism has emerged as an issue, mostly because of the constant work of the ZNM. The ZNM used the year for introspection and it is finally set on the right path, according to panelists. The association began publicly advocating for the rights of journalists, and several actions were undertaken in order to pressure the government into prosecuting violence against journalists.

Non-governmental organizations traditionally supporting media and journalists have downsized their operations and activities, focusing on one to two projects. The lack of financial resources due to donor exit has greatly diminished the internal capacity of these institutions.

With regard to journalist training, the Macedonian Institute for Media offers a one-year journalism course considered to be of acceptable quality covering general topics. Funding for the program is shared between students and donors. But overall, the courses that are available in Macedonia are considered unsatisfactory. The state university has journalism studies, and some private universities offer communications programs. The courses are highly theoretical, however, and after graduation, students find themselves having to learn journalism while doing their jobs.

The biggest newspapers have created a closed, largely unregulated system of printing and distribution. They impose price barriers for any newspaper outside of their system that wants to use their facilities and networks. "Access to the market for new initiatives has become very expensive," said Belicanec. "Access to printing presses and distribution networks has become almost impossible. This is not an economic issue; this is a freedom of expression issue. We will end up in a situation where only organized crime or very rich people may start a new initiative."

SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS FUNCTION IN THE PROFESSIONAL INTERESTS OF INDEPENDENT MEDIA.

SUPPORTING INSTITUTIONS INDICATORS:

- > Trade associations represent the interests of private media owners and provide member services.
- > Professional associations work to protect journalists' rights.
- > NGOs support free speech and independent media.
- > Quality journalism degree programs that provide substantial practical experience exist.
- > Short-term training and in-service training programs allow journalists to upgrade skills or acquire new skills.
- > Sources of newsprint and printing facilities are in private hands, apolitical, and unrestricted.
- > Channels of media distribution (kiosks, transmitters, Internet) are private, apolitical, and unrestricted.

List of Panel Participants

Aco Kabranov, editor-in-chief, Channel 5 TV, Skopje

Goran Gavrilov, manager, Radio Network Channel 77, Stip

Ljubica Mangovska, program director, Tera TV, Bitola

Robert Popovski, president, Association of Journalists, Skopje

Nebojsa Karapejovski, manager, TV Menada, Tetovo

Roberto Belicanec, executive director, Media Development Center, Skopje

Anita Petrovska, editor, MTV, Skopje

Naser Selmani, journalist, *VEST* Daily Newspaper, Skopje

Erol Rizaov, editor-in-chief, *Utrinski vesnik*, Skopje

Muharem Zeqiri, editor-in-chief, ALSAT TV, Skopje

Goran Momirovski, reporter, A1 – National TV, Skopje

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